

February 13, 2011

Mr. Chairman and members of the committee,

I want to express my support for proposed bills "HB-6142" and "HB-6143". I believe there should be stricter penalties for those continue to disregard the law when it comes to operating a motor vehicle.

The loss of my adopted brother Joshua Matthew Metell has brought on the greatest pain I have ever known. I am constantly reminded of the finality of his parting. It is something only the grace of God can help me endure. I wasn't born in Joshua's family, but he made no distinction between me and anyone that would have been a blood relative. That is the kind of person he was. He was a truly caring individual. It makes me so very proud to call him my brother. He was a wonderful, upstanding, intelligent, promising young man. Joshua was a gifted teacher who truly cared for his students. He cared for youth and wanted to see their lives improved and that was clear when we were co-leaders of the youth group at our church. Josh also cared for the community. He formed an event we are proud to carry on today called the "Joshua Metell Three on Three Classic. His vision for that tournament was to improve the community. That was his heart, his passion. The judge presiding over Josh's case said it well when he said that not only had we lost a loved one but it was a "loss to the community". It breaks my heart over and over again to see his graduation picture, and to reflect on what he could have become and the promise he had, because that promise will never come to fruition.

Though my family and I have chosen to forgive the man involved in the accident, we seek justice. This is not limited to Joshua's case, but we want to ensure that other families and communities in Connecticut do not suffer the same kind of loss. Joshua's death was caused by a man who continued to disobey the law, having no regard for society. The penalties he was receiving were not enough to curtail his behavior. I believe we need stricter laws concerning repeat offenders. These individuals put other motorists in danger because they evidently care nothing for aiding by the laws that are meant to keep us safe. There needs to be a very strong deterrent to this type of offender. I believe these proposed bills can be the answer for this issue and will bring us closer to safer roadways in our communities. Thank you for considering my comments.

Sincerely,

Peter Metell